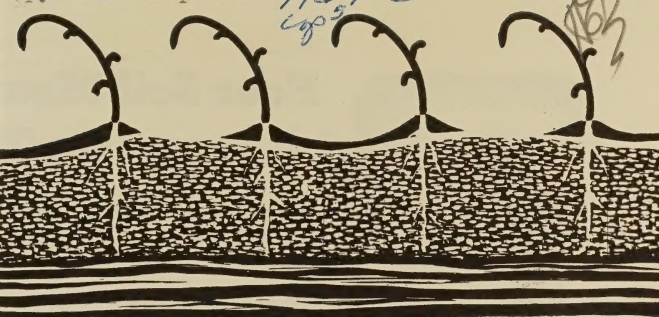


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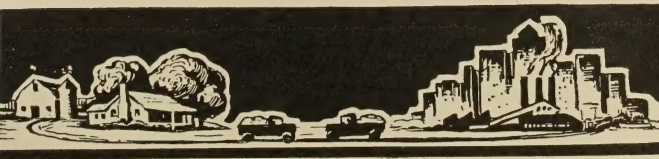


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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# ON TIRED SOIL



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION



# Poor Soil Means Poor People On The Farms and In The Cities

**B**ETWEEN two and three million farm families in the United States live in poverty.

They are lean—these people—not necessarily in body, but in opportunity.

In 1929, according to the census, approximately 1,700,000 farms, or about 30 percent of the total number, had gross annual incomes of less than \$600 a year. After deducting the costs of run-

ning these farms, the average family probably found itself with less than \$300 of net income. That's not very much for a family to get along with for an entire year.

They are poor—in a land of abundance, in a land where at times the abundance is almost wasteful.

Some of them, of course, as is the case among all peoples and in all times, are poor because poverty and dimness and defeat were their inheritance when they were born. But most of these families suffer, not from a heritage of weakness, but from conditions that can be remedied.

They are poor, it may be, because they are trying to farm poor land. Or it may be that their farming practices are bad. They may have worn out the soil, or they may have let erosion eat great washes and gullies into their farms. And, again, they may have asked the land to carry too great a burden of people, as it might under a system of tenancy or sharecropping. And, finally, all of these farm families share with other farmers the hardships attendant upon low income.

The poverty-stricken fringe of our farming population, then, needs opportunity. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration program does much to supply the opportunity. Where the soil is depleted of its fertility, the program provides means of building it up with lime, with fertilizers, and most of all, with soil-

enriching crops such as the legumes. The soil-improvement work on these farms is closely related to the rehabilitation program of the Farm Security Administration.

The Department's conservation program provides the means by which erosion may be controlled. It has a definite plan to raise the income of the farmer by making less and less necessary the excess production of farm products which has usually resulted in unprofitably low prices. These objectives in a newer and wiser agriculture are being reached. Agreement with these objectives would be futile without having the means to achieve them. The dollar which goes from the AAA to the farmer and ranchman does this work before it can be spent.

There are poor people in the cities, too. They have been helped by the free distribution, through relief channels, of surplus farm products. But the basic need of the poor who live in cities, like that of the poverty-stricken farmers, is opportunity. They need and they want work. They need a greater buying power on the part of farmers, so that shops and mills and factories may employ more men.

It is in this poverty-stricken part of our population that the farmer and the consumer meet on common ground. Neither one can prosper fully until these needy people are once more an active part of our economic life.

It is opportunity that is needed, and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration offers an opportunity.

*Henry A. Wallace*

Administrator.

"There is a point of balance . . . where the welfare of both the farmer and the consumer is best served. And it is that point of balance that we are working toward. That is what the agricultural adjustment program is all about."—Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace.



## **Producer-Consumer Leaflets**

This is the third in a series of 12 leaflets dealing with the various ways in which the problems of farmers and city people are related. The following is the complete list of leaflets in the series:

- PC-1 **And So They Meet.**—Farmers and city people: Both producers—both consumers.
- PC-2 **The Things We Want.**—Making abundance work for all our people.
- PC-3 **On Tired Soil.**—Poor soil means poor people on the farms and in the cities.
- PC-4 **Two Families—One Farm.**—Stable tenure means better producers and better consumers.
- PC-5 **To Buy Abundantly.**—Producers of abundance deserve to be consumers of abundance.
- PC-6 **Plenty.**—Avoiding the scarcity of famine and overabundance.
- PC-7 **Between You And Me.**—The distributor's place in production and consumption.
- PC-8 **None Shall Go Hungry.**—Making abundance work for low-income families.
- PC-9 **Grow Your Own.**—Better home living means better production and consumption.
- PC-10 **The Magic Carpet.**—Protection for grassland is protection for cities.
- PC-11 **The Farm Home And AAA.**—Better farm income means better farm homes.
- PC-12 **Country Life And AAA.**—A permanent security for farm and city.

Copies of this leaflet and others in this series may be obtained upon request from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

## **Reference Suggestions**

The material in this leaflet is based on facts presented in various Governmental studies and publications, including:

- "The Nation and the Soil."—Soils and Men, Yearbook of Agriculture, 1938, pages 45-318, U. S. Department of Agriculture.
- "Looking Toward Farm Security."—Report of the Secretary of Agriculture, 1938, pages 63-65. U. S. Department of Agriculture.
- "Conditions Peculiar to United States."—Yearbook of Agriculture, 1937, pages 25-27. U. S. Department of Agriculture